

49th to 10th Street
1845

THE COMMON SCHOOL JOURNAL.

VOL. VII. BOSTON, NOVEMBER 1, 1845. No. 21.

BOSTON GRAMMAR AND WRITING SCHOOLS.

[Extracts from Report of Committee, continued from page 320.]

The natural love for mental exercise is so great, the variety of objects which may be held up to interest the different mental faculties is so inexhaustible, and it is so easy to kindle the enthusiasm of a class, and make it extend even to the dull, that, as we believe, the ferule or the spur of emulation is seldom or never *necessary* to quicken it. We appeal to all who have been idle in school,—and how few have not,—we appeal to all teachers to say, whether, when an interesting event in history is well told, when the manners and customs of a strange country have been vividly depicted, when a striking experiment in natural philosophy is performed, when a mimic creation is going on upon the black-board, and islands, continents and mountains are opening into view beneath the rapid touches of a good draftsman, is there an idle or mischievous scholar among those who comprehend it? It will be said that it is as impossible to keep up the attention of scholars for any length of time, as it is to hold out a weight by the extended arm. Exactly so!—and when that moment comes it is time to change the subject, or give a recess.

Surely any man aspiring to be a teacher, can claim the attention of ten boys, by the interest he will throw into his lessons, without whip or spur; another will so enchain twenty; another fifty;—let each one do all he can do well, and attempt *no* more; the rest of the school can be well governed by assistants. It will be said this is mere theory; we point to thousands of schools in Europe, to scores in our own neighborhood, every whit as difficult to manage as ours, in every respect as well disciplined and as well taught. It will be said that children must be coerced to study some subjects which are too dry and hard to be of themselves interesting; we reply, let the text books for these studies be as interesting as possible, and let the time for studying them be postponed to a later period of the pupil's school life, to the period when his moral sense is developed, and when he understands the value of time. We know very well that the rod cannot be given up at this moment in our schools, organized

as they are, without substituting some other equally objectionable mode of discipline; but this is not because our children are worse than others, nor because the thing is impossible, but because our schools are labor-saving machines,—because an ordinary man, (and surely all our teachers are not extraordinary men,) must, and will take the shortest and easiest course, which is that of coercion, by the fear of physical pain or discomfort; and because we have not enough of female assistance of the highest character. Before we say this cannot be done, let us organize our schools aright, and give them proper female assistants; of whom there are more than enough that nature has fitted for teachers, to take the place of those incumbents who cannot manage children without a constant and habitual appeal to the lowest motives.

On this subject of corporal punishment, and indeed on many others, your committee have sought for light and aid from the masters themselves, and have given to each a series of printed questions, in which they were invited to express fully their opinions on many points connected with the welfare of the schools.

On the question, whether, in their opinion, corporal punishment has increased or diminished since the passage of the resolution requiring that each case be recorded, most of the masters have preserved a remarkable silence, or evaded the question;—only four come out and say frankly that it has diminished. Now this is remarkable, because the fact of its diminution is becoming notorious, and your committee have learned from other sources that this diminution is a very material one.

In reply to another question,—Do you think that the true interest of your scholars has been promoted by the passage of the resolution?—the masters generally answer with an unqualified No. One only says that it has been promoted.

Your committee feel bound to say that all they can learn on this subject convinces them that the more radical measure of abolishing corporal punishment altogether, would have been premature, and probably injurious to the schools; and that it requires great vigilance on the part of the School Committee and the friends of the scholars, to prevent the resort to worse measures than blows, by those who are incapacitated by nature from governing by higher means; and great attention, too, on their part, as friends of the masters, that they may be encouraged and supported in the attempts at reform, which we believe are honestly made.

Your committee would fain digress here a moment, and allude to what seems to them perfectly obvious, and yet is difficult of proof;—the want of a feeling of manly independence, and of fearless frankness, on the part of the masters. We were everywhere, as your representatives, treated with great respect and deference; but in the reply to many of our oral and printed questions, there very generally seemed to be an excessive reserve. The masters evidently are very desirous of obeying implicitly, and in some cases blindly, every wish of the General Committee; but they seem to fear a secret power which may govern them and the committee too.

This is very unfortunate, for the committee never can accomplish its high purpose without the hearty coöperation and the full confidence of the masters. For want of this the wisest measures that can be devised in this room, will be productive of very little good in the schoolroom. Your committee endeavored to meet the masters as gentlemen and friends; and would be equally surprised and pained to learn that anything on their part inspired that feeling of restraint and reserve, and that indisposition to coöperate with us in an honest endeavor to find out the true condition of the schools, which certainly were obvious among a few of them.

For instance, we would gladly have gone into the important subject of text books; and we gave to each master, among our printed questions, the following: Can you suggest any improvement in the text books studied in our schools?

Most of the masters declined answering this question; those who did answer, touched it as one would handle the edge of a very sharp instrument; and the only full, free and valuable communication was given by an energetic and able master, after assurance *that no public use would be made of it!* Such a state of things ought not to be. It is discreditable to this committee, and injurious to the masters and to their schools, to have them placed in such relations, that they dare not express their honest opinion of any text book, used in any department of instruction, let who will own the copy-right.

But to return to the subject of corporal punishment. If it can be abolished only by increasing the gloom of that atmosphere which hangs like a pall over some schoolhouses, where the iron face of authority is the central source whence emanate the fear and distrust that chill the young and timid into unnatural sobriety; if for blows upon the hand there must be blows upon the soul, then we say, give back the rod to the master.

If to adults are given all the property and all the authority in the world, to children is given the heritage of happy hearts; every generation that comes along, proclaims its careless joy by their happy faces and gladsome frolics; and thus through the whole warp of humanity runs a beautiful thread of happiness, which we may trace back to the great source of all love and all good. We would not that this thread should be needlessly broken for a moment; and we prefer that the few reckless and turbulent spirits should be kept in subordination by the rod, rather than that a whole school should be held under severe restraint.

Or, if the other great motive power in our Boston schools must be increased; if emulation must, even more than it now does, produce envyings and jealousies and strife, and the contented indolence of the many who early find that they cannot succeed; again we say, rather give back the rod. But we do not believe that this is necessary; abundant experience has proved that schools as large, and as difficult of management as ours, can be governed by an appeal to higher motives than a fear of pain; and we will not believe that the children of Boston are less alive to appeals to their sense of duty, to their self-respect,

to their love of knowledge, than the children of the most favored city in the world. Nor do we believe that men cannot be found, soon, if not now, competent to the task of guiding and teaching our children by appeals to higher motives ; for we know that some such are to be found among our present masters. Give them associates who will not try to pull them down to their own inferior level,—give them smaller classes and more assistants,—give them more models,—maps,—apparatus, and means of illustration, and, above all, give them more active and visible sympathy and respect, and every school in Boston will be as one or two are now, a place to which children delight to resort.

We cannot forbear repeating the remark, that we render the highest respect to the faithful teacher and his most useful profession. There is no station higher or more honorable than that occupied by the guides and guardians of youth. The profession of the teacher has a direct influence upon the most important interests of society ; it is felt most essentially in the formation of individual character ; and in its ultimate effects and consequences it is coëxtensive with the existence of the soul itself.

In order adequately to fill this high station, and meet these weighty responsibilities, something more is requisite than mere scholarship. A thorough acquaintance with the various branches of study taught in our schools, although indispensable, is yet only a part of the teacher's qualifications.

Much depends upon his moral character. If he is known to be a good man, governing himself by correct principles, and acting habitually from a high sense of duty, he will have the respect and confidence of his pupils ; his character will give weight to his instructions, and inspire the youth under his care with motives to study and to good behavior, such as can be supplied from no other source. But if a teacher is reckless of principle, and incapable of controlling his own temper ; if he is not seen to be himself in subjection to the authority of conscience and of God, no other means which he can employ will make him a good disciplinarian. He cannot govern his school. He may, by hard words and harder blows, impose temporary restraints upon the pupils ; but their characters are unchanged, except from bad to worse.

The efficiency of the teacher depends essentially upon the interest he feels in his scholars. There is a great difference in this respect among instructors, everywhere. Some appear to have no higher object in view than simply to go through with their required task. If they teach what is demanded by law, and are with their pupils during the hours assigned in the regulations, they are satisfied. They have apparently no further interest in those immortal minds whose training for this world, and for the future, is in a great measure committed to their agency. Such men are influenced by selfish and mercenary motives, and whatever may be their other qualifications, are unfit for duties, of which they know not the worth.

Is there not some light thrown upon the duties of a school-

master, by the analogies which connect this office with that of a minister of religion? He should be the known and fast friend of those who confide themselves to his instruction. He should be acquainted with the scholars, should visit them at their home, and show an affectionate, parental interest in their welfare. Surely he may be likened to a clergyman in this; that his power depends not more upon the intelligent performance of his public and required duties, than on the thousand attentions that are prompted by the law of love. The secret of his success consists in knowing those with whom he deals; their individual peculiarities, the influences by which they are surrounded, their habits of thought and action, and in being able to sympathize with them where sympathy is most grateful and most useful. The schoolmaster must toil for many hours of many days, and must have his hours of rest and recreation. We do not ask of him to visit all the homes of his pupils. But occasions sometimes occur when visits like these would be practicable and most beneficial. Something of this is now done, but more might be done, and would be eminently useful.

In things like these, we think there is room for improvement in our public schools. There is too great a distance between the teacher and the pupils. Some of the masters reside out of the city, and never see their scholars except in the schoolroom, and know little or nothing of the influences which are bearing upon them in private life. Instead of that free and confiding intercourse which has so powerful an influence upon the warm and generous hearts of youth, the teacher is seen or heard of, loved or feared, only as the "master."

The efficiency and success of the teacher, it may be said, depends very much upon the character of the scholars. If they are dull and unamiable, ungrateful and stupid, his efforts are all lost upon them. But the old proverb is true in reference to teachers as well as clergymen, "Like priest, like people." The teacher, after all, may make his own school. It follows very closely the model of his own character.

If he is competent to his profession, and feels that interest and enthusiasm in it which he ought to feel, he will, of necessity, infuse life and vigor into his pupils; and as to the love, gratitude and confidence of his scholars, these are obtained only by paying the price. He must deserve them. Let him cherish a deep interest in their welfare, and show by patient attention to their mental and moral culture, in season and out of season, that he seeks their good, and he cannot fail to touch a spring from which shall gush forth emotions of gratitude and love. Let him give himself wholly to his work. Let the pupils have the full benefit of his intellectual resources, and ever feel, when in his presence, the refreshing influence of a kind and honest heart, and his words will drop upon them like the rain, and distil as the dew. He will thus rise to the elevated and dignified level of his profession, and the blessing of thousands that are ready to perish will come upon him. Our schools, under such a guardianship, would be what they ought to be, so many centres of a healthy moral influence;—the salt of the earth, and the light of the world.

Finally, we would deprecate the conclusion that we have, in our desire to find out and reform the errors and deficiencies of our schools, overlooked their excellences, which are many and various. All honor to the venerable men who founded such institutions; all honor to the city which so generously upholds them; all honor to our predecessors who have stolen time from the severe labors of the day, and from their hours of rest at night, to watch over and improve them; all honor, and all praise,—ay! the highest and sincerest,—to those masters who have heretofore labored, or now labor, with steadfastness and zeal,—giving their time, their love, their life, to a cause which *they* regard as the noblest to which a mortal can devote himself,—the moulding and training of immortal spirits!

These are not words of hollow pretence; these are not merely feelings got up in the closet; we have, during our long and severe labor, been often cheered by the thought that the schools we were examining were worthy of more than we could do for them; and we have formed acquaintance with masters whom we must ever respect and esteem. That many of our schools are far better than they once were, we well know, and gladly acknowledge. But the knowledge that there are such improvements, has only made us look to the possibility of further progress, and resolve to do all in our power to leave for our children, schools as much better than the present, as the present are better than those of olden time.

THEOPHILUS PARSONS,
S. G. HOWE,
ROLLIN H. NEALE.

[We now copy the printed Questions which were submitted to the scholars who were examined; and we also make an abstract of some of the extraordinary facts brought to light by the extensive and valuable Tables appended to the Report.]

WORCESTER'S HISTORY.

Question 1. What is history?
 Ques. 2. What are some of the uses of history?
 Ques. 3. Enumerate some of the sources of history.
 Ques. 4. What nations are among the first mentioned in history?
 Ques. 5. For what were the Egyptians distinguished?
 Ques. 6. For what were the Phoenicians distinguished?
 Ques. 7. Who was the founder of Babylon, and about what period did he live?
 Ques. 8. Who was the founder of the Persian empire?
 Ques. 9. Who were some of the most distinguished orators and poets of Greece?
 Ques. 10. Who was the founder of Rome?
 Ques. 11. What was the character of the early government of Rome?
 Ques. 12. Can you mention the names of the Roman emperors?
 Ques. 13. Can you give any account of the feudal system?
 Ques. 14. What were the purposes of the crusades?
 Ques. 15. In what century was the great French revolution, and who were some of the characters who figured in it?
 Ques. 16. What nation ruled Britain at the commencement of the Christian era?
 Ques. 17. Who were the Saxons, and how came they to invade Britain?
 Ques. 18. What do you understand by the Norman conquest?
 Ques. 19. What was the period of the Commonwealth in England, and who was the most distinguished character in it?

Ques. 20. About what period did the first colonists come to New England, and what were the supposed motives for their leaving the mother country?

Ques. 21. How long did they continue subject to the mother country, and what were some of the assigned reasons for throwing off her government?

Ques. 22. When did the war of the American revolution commence, and who were the allies of the Americans?

Ques. 23. When was the present Federal Constitution formed, during or after the war of the revolution, and how many States accepted it at its formation?

Ques. 24. About what period was the embargo laid by President Jefferson, and non-intercourse substituted for it?

Ques. 25. About what period did the last war between Great Britain and the United States commence, and what were the causes assigned by the Americans for its declaration?

Ques. 26. What do you understand by an embargo?

Ques. 27. How many more members are there now, in the Senate of the United States, than there were at its first adoption?

Ques. 28. What was the result of the invasion of Canada by the Americans in the last war?

Ques. 29. What is chronology?

Ques. 30. What are the eras the most used in chronology?

NAME OF SCHOOL.	Total No. of Scholars in the school.	No. examined.	Proportion of the school examined.	Average age of those examined.	No. of correct answers given to the whole No. of questions, by the whole No. of scholars examined.				No. of errors committed in spelling, in giving the answers.				No. of errors committed in punctuation.				No. of errors committed in grammar.				No. of questions not answered.				Percentage of correct answers.				Relative rank of the school.			
					Yrs.	Ms.	No. of correct answers given by all the scholars examined.	No. of errors committed by all the scholars examined.	No. of errors committed in punctuation.	No. of errors committed in grammar.	No. of questions not answered.	Per centage of correct answers.	Relative rank of the school.																			
ADAMS,	418	20.05	12 11	354	600	97	49	665	4	149	.59	.0295																				
BOYLSTON,	534	25.05	14	287	750	161	69	445	51	302	.38	.0190																				
BOWDOIN,	508	42.08	14 8	607	1260	335	39	757	14	318	.48	.0384																				
BRIMMER,	513	36.07	13	279	1080	250	40	270	33	551	.26	.0182																				
ELIOT,	456	21.05	12 8	214	630	112	62	326	12	304	.34	.0170																				
ENDICOTT,	478	18.04	13	114	540	64	24	186	5	362	.21	.0084																				
FRANKLIN,	418	19.05	14 6	148	570	90	12	119	4	332	.26	.0130																				
HAWES,	408	17.04	13 9	124	510	114	32	167	1	272	.24	.0096																				
HANCOCK,	509	45.09	13 9	234	1350	124	42	270	3	992	.17	.0153																				
JOHNSON,	547	50.09	13 6½	264	1500	185	16	229	30	1051	.18	.0162																				
MATHER,	485	18.04	14 6	161	540	118	34	190	1	261	.30	.0120																				
MAYHEW,	368	21.06	13 6	163	630	139	31	158	4	328	.26	.0156																				
OTIS,	467	26.06	13 2	68	780	79	9	78	12	633	.09	.0054																				
PHILLIPS,	440	23.05	12 8	52	690	119	55	268	9	519	.08	.0040																				
WELLS,	307	29.09	13 3	254	870	168	33	523	9	448	.29	.0261																				
WINTHROP,	507	28.06	14 6½	244	840	211	82	573	14	385	.29	.0174																				
DUDLEY, {	350	29.08	14 6	368	870	148	13	449	7	354	.42	.0336																				
ROXBURY.																																

WORDS TO BE DEFINED.

1. <i>Monotony.</i>	8. <i>Forum.</i>	15. <i>Aërial.</i>	22. <i>Misnomer.</i>
2. <i>Convocation.</i>	9. <i>Evanescence.</i>	16. <i>Sphinx.</i>	23. <i>Zoönomia.</i>
3. <i>Bifurcation.</i>	10. <i>Importunate.</i>	17. <i>Rosemary.</i>	24. <i>Maniacal.</i>
4. <i>Panegyric.</i>	11. <i>Infatuated.</i>	18. <i>Thanatopsis.</i>	25. <i>Hallucination.</i>
5. <i>Vicegerent.</i>	12. <i>Kirk.</i>	19. <i>Monody.</i>	26. <i>Machiavelli.</i>
6. <i>Esplanade.</i>	13. <i>Connoisseur.</i>	20. <i>Anthology.</i>	27. <i>Madrigals.</i>
7. <i>Preternatural.</i>	14. <i>Dormant.</i>	21. <i>Pother.</i>	28. <i>Hades.</i>

NAME OF SCHOOL.	Total No. of scholars in the school.	No. examined.	Proportion of the school examined.	Average age of those examined.		No. of correct answers given to the whole No. of questions by the whole No. of scholars examined.	No. of correct answers there would have been, had all the scholars answered correctly.	No. of incorrect answers given.	No. of errors committed in spelling, in giving the answers.	No. of errors committed in punctuation.	No. of errors committed in grammar.	No. of questions not answered.	Per centage of correct answers.	Relative rank of the school.
				Yrs.	Ms.									
ADAMS,	418	35.08	12 11	333	980	317	26	577	12	330	34.0272			
BOYLSTON,	534	36.07	14	402	1008	426	20	585	9	180	40.0280			
BOWDOIN,	508	43.08	14 8	556	1204	365	3	591	8	283	46.0368			
BRIMMER,	513	56.11	13	235	1568	310	18	369	1	1023	15.0165			
ELIOT,	456	21.05	12 8	322	588	127	9	363	4	139	55.0275			
ENDICOTT,	478	34.07	13	93	952	42	4	92	1	817	10.0070			
FRANKLIN,	418	19.05	14 6	117	532	175	8	109	0	240	22.0110			
HAWES,	408	17.04	13 9	96	476	160	10	110	1	220	20.0080			
HANCOCK,	509	45.09	13 9	179	1266	84	6	110	2	997	14.0126			
JOHNSON,	547	50.09	13 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	197	1400	210	1	245	0	993	14.0126			
MATHER,	485	18.04	14 6	134	504	110	0	185	0	260	27.0108			
MAYHEW,	368	20.05	13 6	95	560	95	3	136	1	370	17.0085			
OTIS,	467	24.05	13 2	76	672	33	3	69	3	563	11.0055			
PHILLIPS,	440	35.08	12 8	78	980	99	10	294	1	803	08.0064			
SMITH,	163	6.04		0	168	16	1	16	0	152	00.0000			
WELLS,	307	29.09	13 3	309	812	234	4	486	2	269	38.0342			
WINTHROP,	507	28.06	14 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	289	784	222	16	482	4	273	37.0222			
DUDLEY, ROXBURY.	350	29.08	14 6	367	812	133	5	384	1	312	45.0360			

GEOGRAPHY.

Question 1. Name the principal lakes in North America.

Ques. 2. Name the principal rivers in North America.

Ques. 3. Name the rivers running eastward into the Mississippi.

Ques. 4. Name the rivers running westward into the Mississippi.

Ques. 5. Name the states which lie upon each bank of the Mississippi, and their capitals.

Ques. 6. Do the waters of Lake Erie run into Lake Ontario, or the waters of Ontario into Erie?

Ques. 7. Which is most elevated above the level of the sea, Lake Superior or Lake Huron?

Ques. 8. Write down the boundaries of Lake Erie.

Ques. 9. Quebec is, (according to your maps,) $4^{\circ} 40'$ north from Boston; Ithaca, in New York, is $5^{\circ} 30'$ west from Boston. Which place is furthest from Boston?

Ques. 10. What is the general course of the rivers in North and South Carolina?

Ques. 11. What is the general course of the rivers in Kentucky and Tennessee?

Ques. 12. What is the cause of the rivers in these four contiguous states running in opposite directions?

Ques. 13. Which is most accessible, in its interior parts, to ships and to commerce, Europe or Africa?

Ques. 14. Name the empires of Europe.

Ques. 15. Name the kingdoms of Europe.

Ques. 16. Name the republics of Europe.

Ques. 17. What is the nearest route from England to India,—by the Cape of Good Hope, or by the Red Sea?

Ques. 18. What do you understand by the line of perpetual snow?

Ques. 19. On which range of mountains is the line of perpetual snow most elevated above the ocean, on the Rocky Mountains of North America, or on the Cordilleras of Mexico?

Ques. 20. The city of Mexico is in 20° of N. latitude; the city of New Orleans is in 30° of N. latitude. Which has the warmest climate?

Ques. 21. Name the rivers, gulfs, oceans, seas and straits, through which a vessel must pass in going from Pittsburg in Pennsylvania, to Vienna in Austria.

Ques. 22. On which bank of the Ohio is Cincinnati, on the right or left?

Ques. 23. What are the principal natural and artificial productions of New England?

Ques. 24. Over what continents and islands does the line of the equator pass?

Ques. 25. What parts of the globe have the longest days?

Ques. 26. If a merchant in Moscow dines at 3 o'clock, P. M., and a merchant in Boston at 2 o'clock, which dines first?

Ques. 27. Name the countries which lie around the Mediterranean Sea.

Ques. 28. What countries lie around the Black Sea?

Ques. 29. What rivers flow into the Black Sea?

Ques. 30. Name the principal ports of Russia on the Black Sea, on the White Sea, and on the Gulf of Finland.

Ques. 31. Draw an outline map of Italy.

NAME OF SCHOOL.	Total No. of scholars in the school.	No. examined.	Proportion of the school exam- ined.	Average age of those examined.		No. of correct answers given to the whole No. of questions, by the whole No. of scholars examined.	No. of correct answers there- would have been, had all the scholars answered correctly.	No. of incorrect answers given.	No. of errors committed in Spell- ing, in giving the answers.	No. of errors committed in Punc- tuation.	No. of errors committed in Gram- mar.	No. of questions not answered.	Per centage of correct answers.	Relative rank of the school.
				Yrs.	Mo.									
ADAMS,	418	36	.09	12	11	421	1116	447	179	1451	5	248	.38	.0342
BOYLSTON,	534	33	.06	14		397	1023	317	98	1398	0	309	.39	.0234
BOWDOIN,	508	42	.08	14	8	563	1302	493	172	987	1	246	.43	.0344
BRIMMER,	513	40	.08	13		379	1240	463	231	1189	20	398	.31	.0248
ELIOT,	456	22	.05	12	8	292	682	187	57	829	6	203	.43	.0215
ENDICOTT,	478	28	.06	13		252	868	318	160	1088	3	298	.29	.0174
FRANKLIN,	418	20	.05	14	6	192	620	216	50	498	2	212	.31	.0155
HAWES,	408	17	.04	13	9	174	527	199	35	261	3	154	.33	.0132
HANCOCK,	509	45	.09	13	9	515	1395	325	94	617	1	555	.37	.0333
JOHNSON,	547	49	.09	13	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	430	1519	457	126	1012	2	632	.28	.0252
MATHER,	485	17	.04	14	6	208	527	195	83	774	4	124	.39	.0156
MAYHEW,	368	24	.07	13	6	180	744	150	133	609	3	414	.24	.0168
OTIS,	467	27	.06	13	2	154	837	117	46	309	2	566	.18	.0108
PHILLIPS,	440	22	.05	12	8	225	682	222	104	371	5	235	.33	.0165
SMITH,	163	8	.05			27	248	38	19	219	5	183	.11	.0055
WELLS,	307	29	.09	13	3	384	899	254	72	805	1	261	.43	.0387
WINTHROP,	507	28	.06	14	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	400	868	273	100	1608	0	195	.46	.0276
DUDLEY, ROXBURY,	350	29	.08	14	6	493	899	324	51	1111	0	82	.55	.0440

Having now completed our extracts from the Report of the Committee on the *Grammar Schools*, and also our abstract of the Tables, we find the whole subject too deeply freighted with interest and instruction to allow us to pass it unnoticed. In order that our remarks may stand in immediate connection with

the subject to which they refer, we postpone, until another opportunity, the consideration of the facts contained in the Report of the committee on the *Writing* department.

In the first place, not the city of Boston only, but the whole State, and the cause of education generally, are under a vast debt of obligation to the committees who assumed, and who have carried through, the labor of this novel mode of examination. We call it novel, because, although such a plan of examination is common in Europe, and has been partially adopted in some places in this country, yet we have seen nothing, on this side of the Atlantic, so thorough and complete, and embracing, in one view, so large a number of schools and of scholars, as the Boston committees' Reports. We venture to predict, that the mode of examination, *by printed questions and written answers*, will constitute a new era in the history of our schools. There is a variety of reasons which give it a decided superiority over any and all other methods,—some of which we proceed to notice.

1. *It is impartial.* It is impartial, not in a limited, but in a very extended application of that term; for it submits the *same* question not only to all the scholars who are to be examined, in the same school, but to all the schools of the same class or grade. Scholars in the same school, therefore, can be equitably compared with each other; and all the different schools are subjected to a measurement by the same standard. Take the best school committee man who ever exposed the nakedness of ignorance, or detected fraud, or exploded the bubbles of pretension, and let him examine a class orally, and he cannot approach exactness, in judging of the *relative* merits of the pupils, by any very close approximation. And the reason is apparent. He must propound different questions to different scholars; and it is impossible that these questions should be equal, in point of ease or difficulty. A poor scholar may be asked a very easy question, and answer it. A good scholar may be asked a very difficult one, and miss it. In some cases, a succeeding scholar may profit by the mistake of a preceding one; so that, if there had been a different arrangement of their seats, the record would have borne a different result of *plus* and *minus*. The examiner may prepare himself beforehand as carefully as he pleases, and mark out the precise path he intends to pursue, and yet, in spite of himself, he may be thrown out of his course by unforeseen circumstances. But when the questions are the same, there is exactness of equality. Balances cannot weigh out the work more justly. So far as the examination is concerned, all the scholars are "born free and equal."

Suppose a race were to be run by twenty men, in order to determine their comparative fleetness; but instead of bringing them upon the same course, where they should all stand abreast and start abreast, one of them should be selected to run one mile, and then a second, starting where the first one stopped, should run another mile, and so on until the whole had entered the lists; might it not, and would it not so happen that one would have the luck of running up hill, and another down; that one would run over a good turnpike and another over a

"corduroy?" Pupils required to answer dissimilar questions, are like runners obliged to test their speed by running on dissimilar courses.

Again, it is clear that the larger the number of questions put to a scholar, the better is the opportunity to test his merits. If but a single question be put, the best scholar in the school may miss it, though he would answer the next twenty without a blunder; or the poorest scholar may succeed in answering one question, though certain to fail in twenty others. Each question is a partial test, and the greater the number of questions, therefore, the nearer does the test approach to completeness. It is very uncertain which face of a die will be turned up at the first throw; but if the dice are thrown all day, there will be a great equality in the number of the different faces turned up.

In fine, the method adopted by the committees, was not merely impartial,—for this is only an adjective,—but it was the noun substantive, *Impartiality* itself.

2. *This method is far more just than any other to the pupils themselves.* It may be said that this is only a corollary from our preceding position. It is, however, something more. Suppose, under the form of oral examination, an hour is assigned to a class of thirty pupils,—this gives two minutes apiece. But under the late mode of examination, we have the paradox, that an hour for thirty is sixty minutes apiece. Now it often happens that a sterling scholar is modest, diffident, and easily disconcerted under new circumstances. Such a pupil requires time to collect his faculties. Give him this, and he will not disappoint his best friends. Debar him from this, and a forth-putting, self-esteeming competitor may surpass him. In an exercise of two minutes, therefore, the best scholar may fail, because he loses his only opportunity while he is summoning his energies to improve it; but give him an hour, and he will have time to rally and do himself justice. It is one of the principal recommendations of this method, indeed, that it excludes surprise as one of the causes of failure, and takes away the simulation of it as an excuse.

3. *The method under consideration is the most thorough.* To give out two or three questions on the whole subject of grammar, or geography, for instance, or to require the solution of a single question in arithmetic, resembles not a little the device of that *Scholastikos* in the fable, who, wishing to sell his house, carried a brick to market as a specimen. It is true the brick gave some indication about the house, as a single answer may do about a pupil's knowledge of a study; but both a discreet purchaser and a discreet examiner would like some additional information.

4. *The new method prevents the officious interference of the teacher.* Nothing is more annoying to a good examiner than to be interrupted by the teacher. It sometimes happens that when an examiner has brought a pupil or a class to a test-question,—to a point that will reveal their condition as to ignorance or knowledge,—the teacher bolts out with some suggestion or leading question that defeats the whole purpose at a breath. We

would look with all possible lenity upon teachers who take such a course; for we perceive the vehemence of the temptation under which they labor. When the pupils of their favorite class, and perhaps in their favorite study, are in danger of being sunk in the abysses of their own ignorance, how natural it is for a kind-hearted and quick-feeling teacher to wish to throw them a rope. But such interference is unjust, not to say ungentlemanly. The case supposed is the very juncture where the teacher should abstain from intermeddling, though he should be obliged to thrust his pocket-handkerchief into his mouth, or put his head out of the window. Of what use to examine a school, if each boy and girl is to be like Punch and Judy in the puppet-show, and to be told by another the things they are to say? While, then, we respect the feelings which prompt the teacher to interfere with the course of the examination, we consider it a great point gained, to prevent the mischief of their indulgence. Now where a school is examined by written or printed questions, distributed on the instant, by the examining committee, —questions of which the teachers themselves are as ignorant as the pupils,—they must, perforce, look on at their leisure. Though they writhe in anxiety, yet their ill-judged kindness can do no harm; their improper suggestions are excluded. They are obliged to reflect that the day of probation has passed; the time for trial and judgment has come.

5. And, what is not inferior in value to either of the preceding considerations, *it does determine, beyond appeal or gainsaying, whether the pupils have been faithfully and competently taught.*

All pupils of average ability, who have been properly taught, should have a command, not merely of the particular fact, or the general statement of a truth or principle, but also of its connections, relations and applications; and every faithful examiner will strive to know whether they possess the latter as well as the former species of information. Text books contain a much greater proportion of isolated facts, and of abstract principles, than of relations and applications. This is the circumstance which gives pertinency and significancy to their distinctive appellation,—*text books*. They are books containing *texts*. These texts the teacher is to expound. Each one of them should be the foundation of a discourse, or of a series of discourses. This is *teaching*. Hearing recitations from a book, is not teaching. It has no claim to be called by this dignified and expressive name. It is the exposition of the principle contained in the book; showing its connection with life, with action, with duty; making it the nucleus around which to gather all related facts and all collateral principles:—it is this, and this only, which can be appropriately called *teaching*. All short of this is mere journey-work, rude mechanical labor and drudgery.

Now the method of examination lately adopted by the Boston School Committees, settles the question as definitively, what kind or quality of instruction has been given by the masters, as it does what amount or extent of proficiency has been made by the pupils. A pupil may most faithfully commit the whole

of one of our grammars to memory, and yet know nothing more of the science of English Grammar, than a parrot, who has been taught to say "Pretty Poll," knows of the power and copiousness of the English language; or he may con Geography and Atlas, till he can repeat every line in the one and remember every island speck in the other, and yet have no distinct conception of anything beyond the visible horizon. A child may know,—as any child unless it be an idiotic one does,—that water will run down hill, and yet never be led to embrace the truth, that it is mountain ridges and table lands that give descent and direction to the course of rivers. Nay, because he has faithfully learned the fact that the *upper* part of a map represents the north, he may conscientiously deny that the waters of Lake Erie run into Lake Ontario, because, as he holds his map before him, it looks as though they must, for that purpose, *run up hill*. A child may know how to spell from a spelling-book, and yet, when put to the twofold operation of *writing and spelling*, he may bring vowels and consonants into very strange juxtapositions. Or he may be introduced to ten thousand English words, and not know the real meaning and use of more than five hundred of them.

We repeat, then, that this method of examination tests, in a most admirable manner, the competency or sufficiency of the teaching which the pupils have received; for, as a workman is not taught any art or handicraft, until he can execute it, so a child is not taught any principle until he can explain or apply it. Where children of ordinary abilities have been continuously and for a long time under instruction, any deficiencies, of the kinds above specified, are not to be laid to their charge, but to that of their instructors. How should pupils know what lies beyond the text book, or what is necessary in order to understand the text book, unless they have been taught it? The case is different, we acknowledge, with regard to children who attend school irregularly, or for short periods only. In such cases, it would be unjust to hold the instructor responsible for their deficiencies.

6. There is another point, in which every faithful committee man has a deep interest, which is not merely subserved, but secured by the mode under consideration. *It takes away all possibility of favoritism, and all ground for the suspicion of favoritism.* A most unpleasant, and, generally, we doubt not, an unfounded accusation, is sometimes brought against examiners;—namely, that they are guilty of partiality in putting out questions; that they visit the iniquities of fathers upon children, by selecting difficult questions for the child of an adversary or opponent, and reserving the easy ones for the children of friends. Now, in its practical mischiefs, the next worst thing to their committing so unjust an act, is the suspicion that they have committed it. Either the fact or the suspicion greatly impairs the value, if it does not defeat the object of an examination. We have known instances where it would have been far better that there should have been no examination at all, than to have the cry of injustice raised, and the feelings of the

district exasperated against committee men. But by putting the same questions to all, not only the odious offence of favoritism, but even an indulgence of the suspicion of it, is excluded.

7. We shall mention but one more point of superiority possessed by the method under consideration over all others. When the oral method is adopted, none but those personally present at the examination can have any accurate or valuable idea of the appearance of the school. By hearing the questions asked and the answers given, they may form a notion, more or less correct, of the attainments of the pupils, and the readiness with which they can command them. But all the information which approaches authenticity is confined within the walls of the schoolroom. Whoever is not *there*, and is not there at the *time*, too, must rely upon rumor for his opinions. Not so, however, when the examination is by printed questions and written answers. A transcript, a sort of Daguerreotype likeness, as it were, of the state and condition of the pupils' minds, is taken and carried away, for general inspection. Instead of being confined to committee and visitors, it is open to all; instead of perishing with the fleeting breath that gave it life, it remains a permanent record. All who are, or who may afterwards become interested in it, may see it. The school, during successive years too, can be compared with itself, in order to determine whether it is advancing or retrograding; or whether it has improved under one teacher, while it deteriorates under another. It is true that the committees, from year to year, under the old method, may make known their opinion,—they may write it out and publish it;—but different committees will have different standards of excellence; and thus it is quite possible that a school may have a brightening reputation, while in reality it is running down, and a waning one while it is improving. If every man's foot is to be taken as twelve inches long, it becomes an important question by whose foot we shall measure. So of the different standards of judging in the minds of different men.

Another remark falls appropriately under this head. Where the questions are all printed and preserved, their character as to ease or difficulty can be seen. Should the questions be too difficult for children of the age and opportunities of those examined, equitable abatement can be made for their failures. If, on the other hand, the questions are simple, and yet the children blunder, the censure must fall upon them with proportionate severity. If the scholars fail to answer, with promptitude and correctness, such questions as are found in the books, *they* must bear a portion at least of the dishonor; but if they answer from the book accurately and readily, but fail in those cases which involve relations and the application of principles, the dishonor must settle upon the heads of the teachers. Whether one or the other, whether more or less of either, cannot be sufficiently known, unless the character of the questions is known. This important knowledge can be obtained only when the question can be inspected;—that is, only when the written method of examination has been employed.

In closing our remarks upon their mode of examination, we doubt not the committee will be willing to listen to a suggestion which we respectfully make, in relation to it. The suggestion, however, has reference rather to the next year's examination, than to that of the present year. But we presume, that since the present experiment has so clearly demonstrated the superiority of the written over the oral method of examination, no committee will ever venture to relapse into the former inadequate and uncertain practice.

For future examinations, then, we would suggest a plan which, while it will very much abridge the labor of the committee, will present their results in a more tangible form. As at present organized, the different schools differ considerably from each other in the number of their pupils; and we see, by referring to the tables appended to the report, that the proportion of the school submitted to this method of examination, differs greatly in different schools;—varying, in Geography, from .04 to .09 per cent.; in Definitions, from .04 to .11; in Natural Philosophy, from .03 to .09, and so forth. Now, the less the proportion of scholars examined, in a particular school, the better ought the results of that examination to be, in order to make it equal any other school where the proportion examined was greater. No one, without looking at the Tables we have prepared, can duly estimate the vast *apparent* advantage which some teachers have gained over others, by the smallness of the number in the class belonging to their schools, which was examined. But the casual reader will never stop to estimate the result of the compound ratios, to be embraced in the comparison of one school with another; and, indeed, when different schools are to be compared together for a series of years, it would make a somewhat complicated problem. To obviate this difficulty, and to make easy, a b c work of the whole matter, we would suggest that a certain per centage of pupils should be taken for examination from each school; and the same per centage in all the schools. For instance, if there are 500 scholars in a school, let 100, or 20 per cent., be taken; if there are 400 in the school, let 80 be taken,—different numbers, but the same per centage;—and then the result will be as intelligible, and as easily compared, one part with another, as a column of ordinals.

We mention 20 per cent. because we observe by the Reports that, in some schools and in some important studies, only a very small proportion of the school was submitted for examination. In English grammar, the highest proportion examined in any school was only *nine* per cent.; and it appears by the Report of the committee on the Writing department, that although there were 8,343 children in the schools at the time of the examination, only 308 were examined,—considerably less than four per cent. Now, every honest master will rejoice to have the temptation forever taken away from himself and his associates, of submitting only a few,—a select number,—of his scholars for the examination. He will rejoice to have the temptation forever removed of preparing four or five per cent. of his school,

—BRAG SCHOLARS, as they call them at the west,—while he neglects the rest. Besides, if so small a number is taken, many, if not most of the children of poor parents, will leave the school before it will come their turn to be examined in this critical way; and therefore the force of the temptation to neglect this class of children,—who should rather be the special objects of the teacher's care,—will be greatly enhanced.

We must defer a few further remarks upon these important Reports until our next number.

A WARRIOR'S ESTIMATE OF WAR.—Prince Eugene, who was one of the very ablest among the renowned generals of his day, and who had gained honor in many a well-fought battle, made the following remarks in relation to war:

"The thirst of renown sometimes insinuates itself into our councils under the hypocritical garb of national honor. It dwells on imaginary insults, it suggests harsh and abusive language, and people go on from one thing to another till they put an end to the lives of half a million of men. The call for war proceeds generally from those who have no active share in its toils, as ministers, women, and the lounging population of a large town. I said one day in Venice, in a company which was very clamorous for a war, I wish that each of the great men and great women present was ordered by the emperor to contribute at the rate of four thousand ducats a head to the charges of the war, and that the other fine gentlemen among us were made to take the field forthwith in person. A military man becomes so sick of bloody scenes in war, that at peace he is averse to re-commence them. I wish that the first minister who is called on to decide on peace or war had only seen actual service. What pains would he not take to seek in mediation and compromise the means of avoiding the effusion of so much blood! It is ignorance, and levity, which are always cruel, and make cabinets lean to the side of war."

TRUE COURAGE.—He possesses true courage who dares, under all circumstances, to do right. He who shrinks from doing right, through fear of consequences, is a coward.

THE CHIEF QUALITY REQUIRED IN A SOLDIER.—It is health of body,—physical strength, that enables man to endure the hardship of the tented field. It is the good condition of the animal that enables him to fight. We need mere machines for the ranks of the army. To obey is the only duty. Forward is the command. Sufficient intellect to load and fire a musket is all that is wanted; the number killed is the test of merit. A well-trained horse is often more valuable than a score of men with souls!—*Advocate of Peace.*